



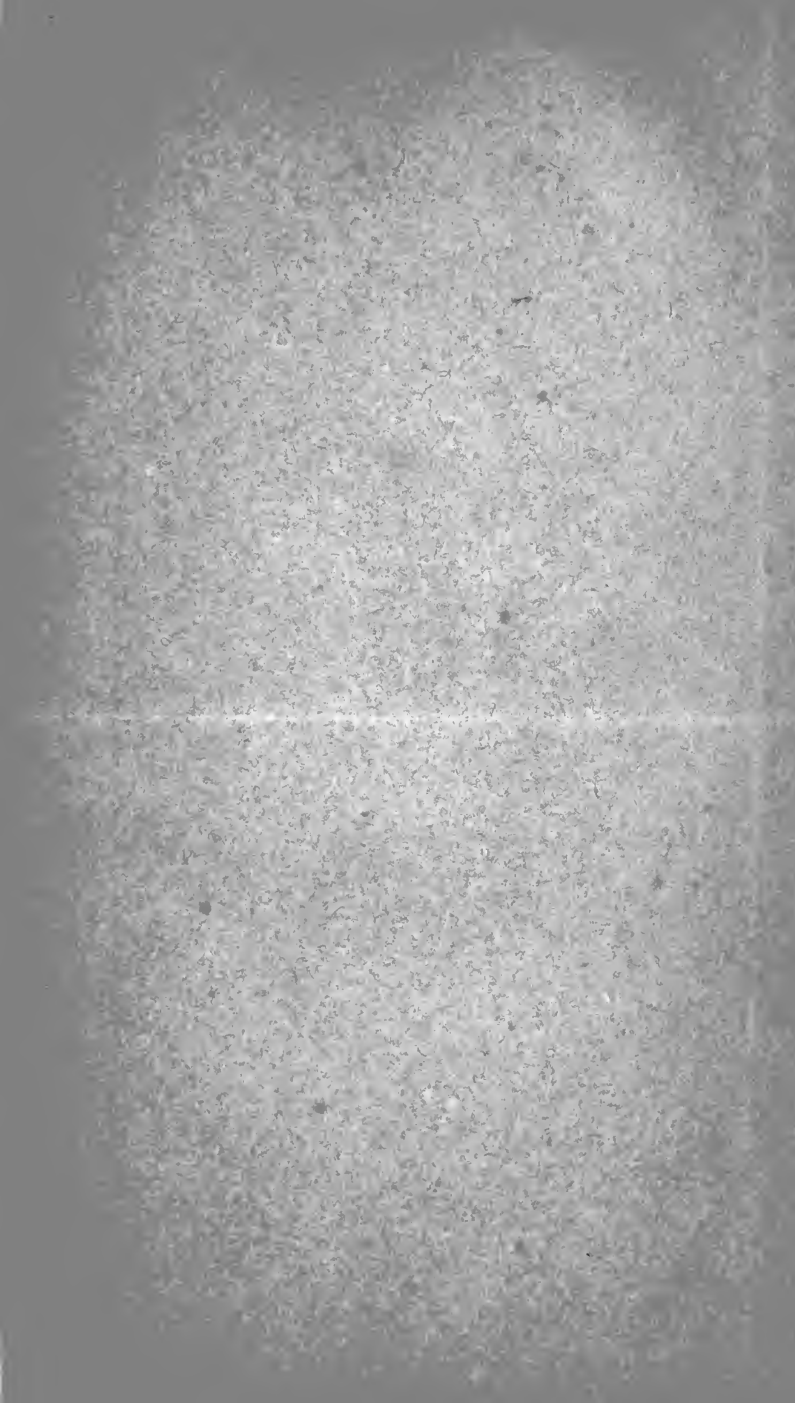
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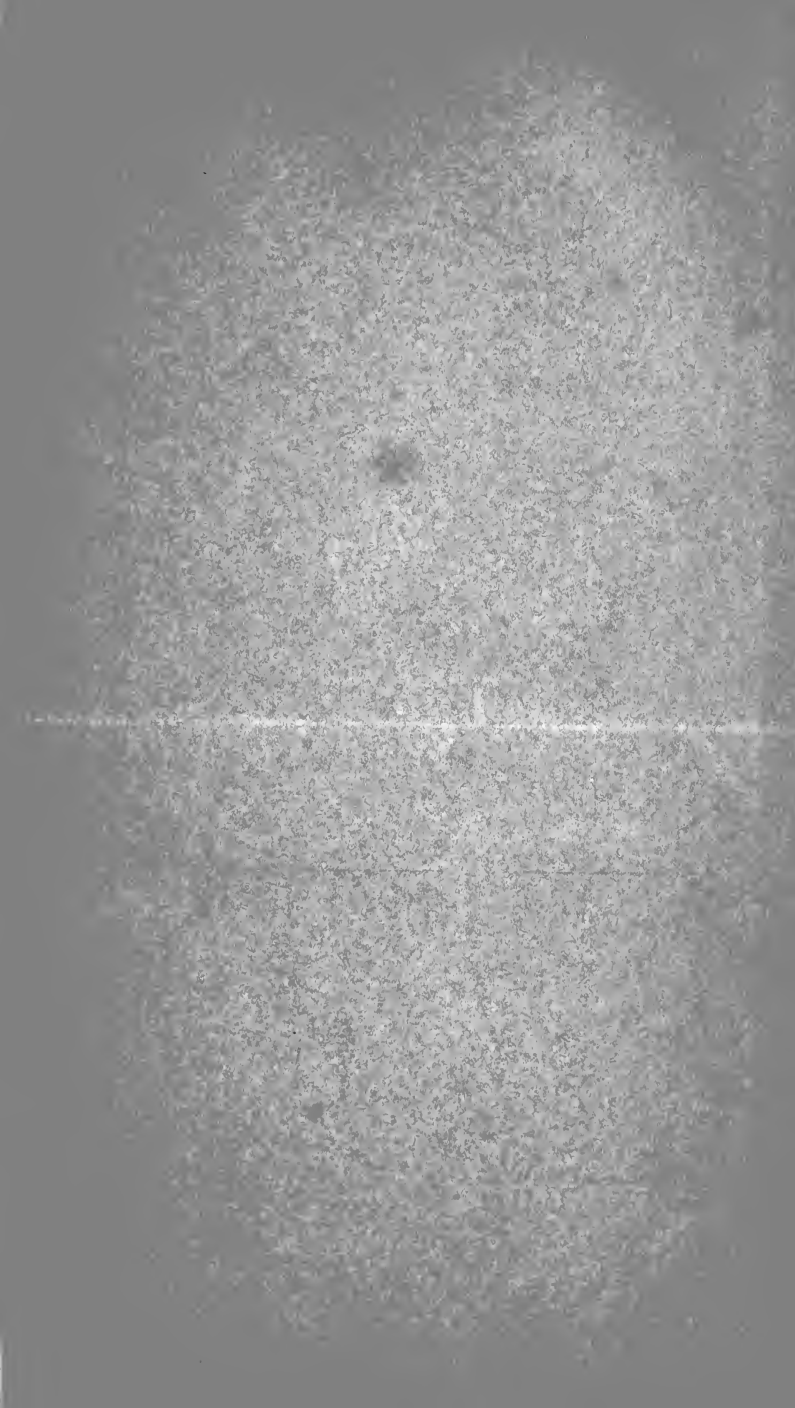
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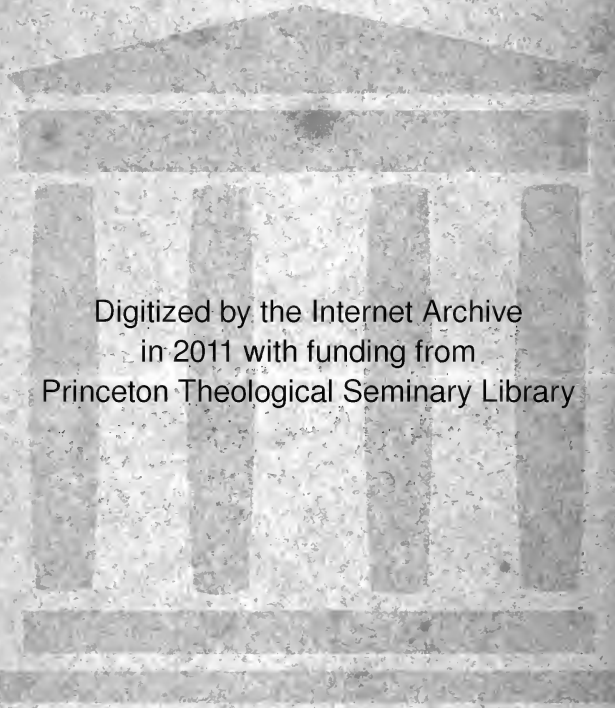
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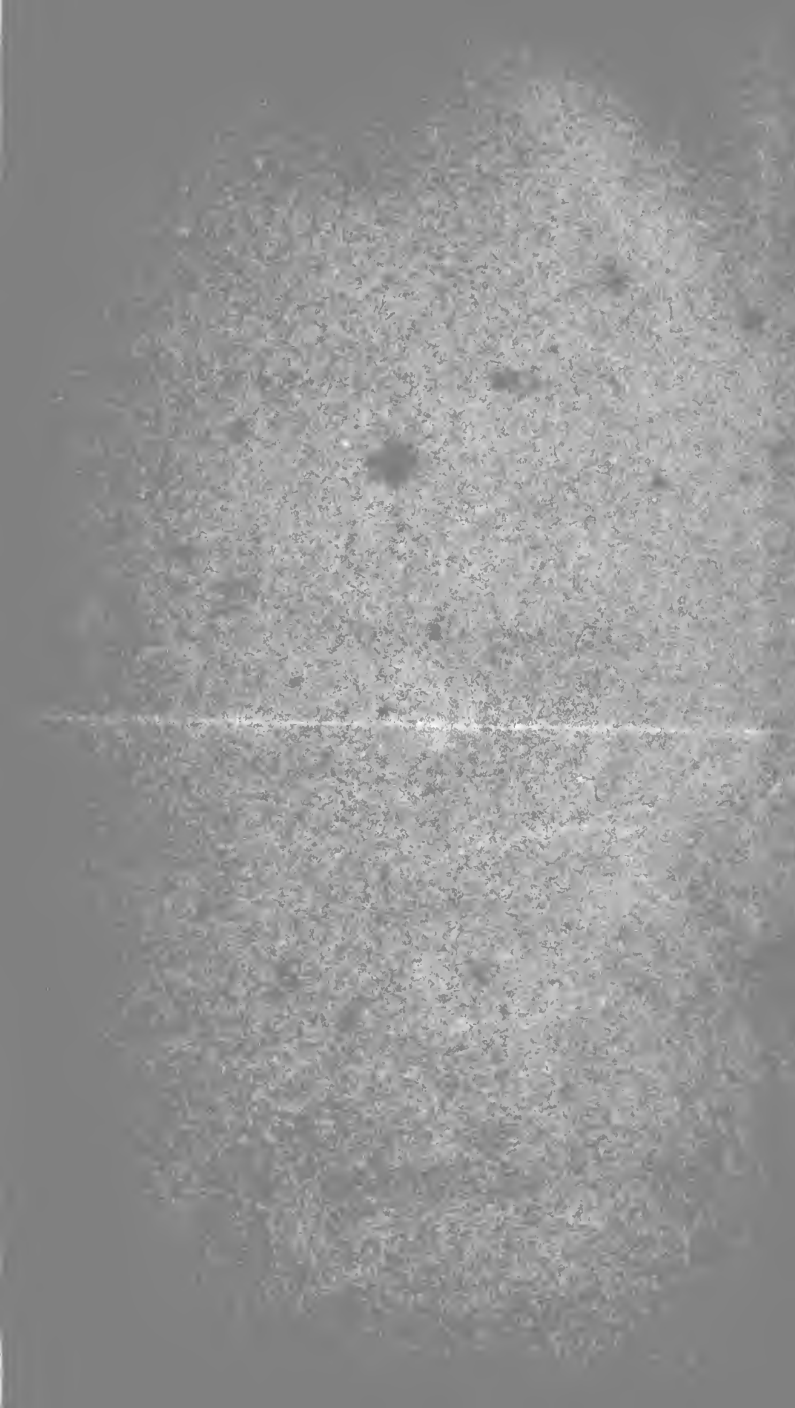


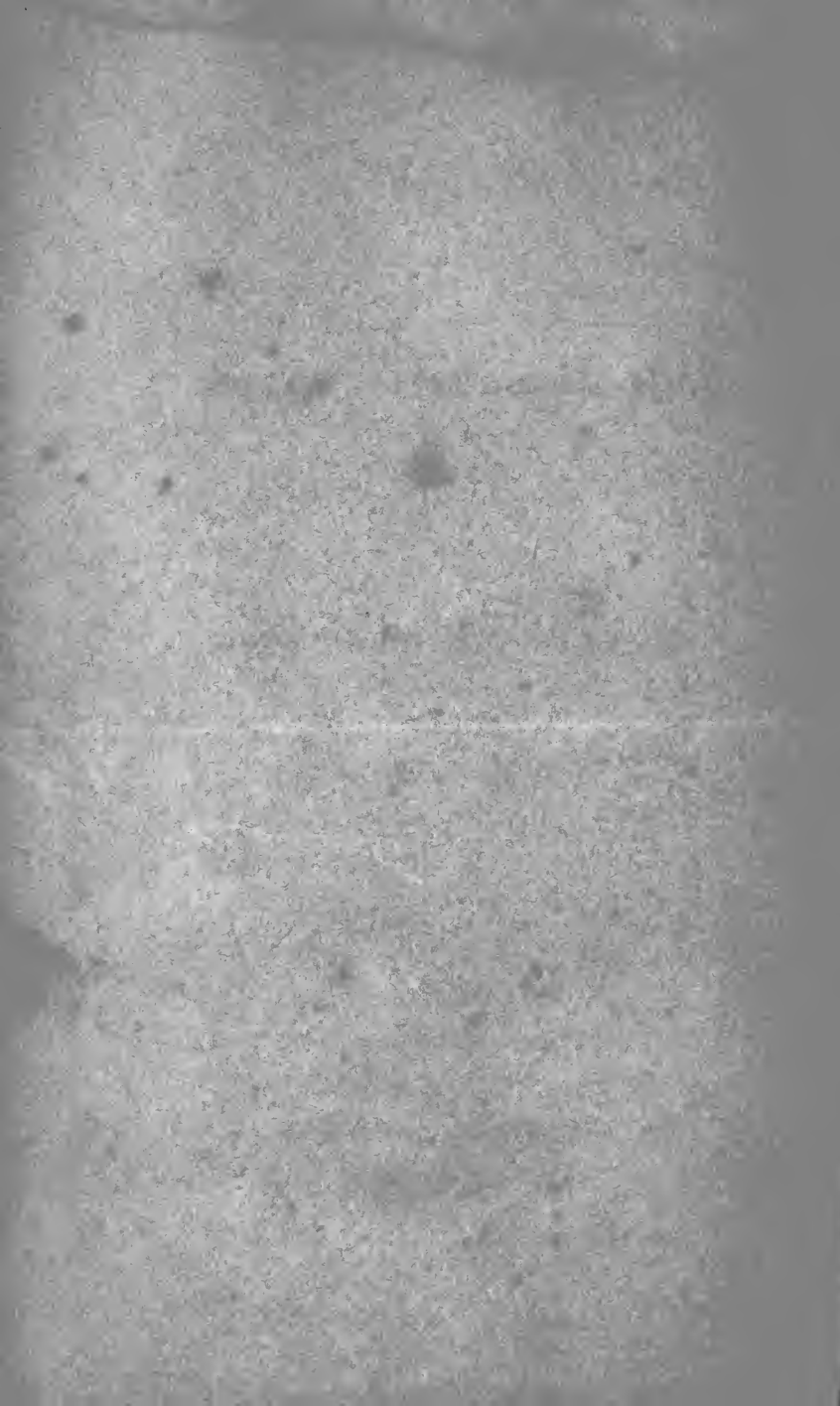






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INTROÏTS:

OR

Ante-Communion Psalms

FOR THE

SUNDAYS AND HOLY-DAYS

Throughout the Year.

by J. H. Alexander
Introibo ad Altare DEI:

—ad DEUM, qui latificat juventutem meam.

John Henry Alexander

PHILADELPHIA:

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1844.



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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THE BISHOP OF MARYLAND.

HOMAGE

OF

AFFECTION AND RESPECT.

———— βροτῶν φρένας

Ἵπ' ἐξ τὸν ἀληθῆ λόγον

Δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις

Ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι.

To the Reader.

IN the First Prayer-book of King EDWARD THE SIXTH, printed in 1549, are to be found, appropriated to each Sunday and Holy-day in the Year, certain Psalms; to be said or sung, while the Priest was entering the Chancel to perform the Offices preceding the Communion. From the circumstance of their position, they bore the name of INTROITS.

The introduction of this portion of Service has the warrant of a very high Antiquity; and it has been preserved in the Roman CHURCH, so far as epoch and source and name (though not so far as individual selections) are concerned, to the present day.

The American CHURCH, too, has recognized in practice, though not in her Liturgy, the use of such

Psalms: only, their determination being left arbitrary with the Minister, they more generally refer to the Sermon which is presently to be preached, than to the Epistle and Gospel which are to be read, or the Lessons for the Day that have been already heard.

The following pages contain metrical Versions, or Paraphrases, of the INTROITS in KING EDWARD'S Book, as (with but one exception) they occur there.

Any particulars as to the motives or aim in composition seem to be unnecessary; unless their expression were capable of atoning for the defects in execution, which are fully perceived and felt: they would be any how out of place; since could good intentions compensate for failure, there would be an end of all criticism.

What here follows, then, is given in the simple hope, that it may not be without interest to such as find pleasure in tracing the Scriptural harmonies and adaptations that are observable in the Services of the CHURCH.

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Overture.

Not, in barren toil or search unholy,
Let my lamp-lit hours protracted be;
Not, in tales of Mirth or Melancholy
Hope and heart exhausted, let me see:
But, with learning meek,
Humbly let me seek
In thy Word, my GOD, to find out Thee!

If mid busy Cares, awhile besetting,
Anxious thoughts and fierce should supervene;
Or, in Pleasure's purple cup forgetting,
Clouds of idol-incense mask the scene:
Where find I, so well
As in Psalms, a spell
Calming fears and making skies serene?

Let me rede it now, while Morn fresh-blowing
 Tempts me from thy simple shrine to stray;
And more late, as Noon intense and glowing
 Holds a golden sceptre o'er my way,
 As while Evening falls
 On old ruined walls,
Where Doubts lurk and Superstitions gray.

And at last, when in my trial lonely
 Shapes of terror haunt my couch and me,
Of thy sacred Scriptures, let me only
 Draw good store from faithful Memory:
 —So, to my dim eyes
 Bright shall grow the skies,
Sure the road, my GOD, to find out Thee!

INTROITS.

PRELUDE.

GOLDEN DREAMS, THAT CROWD
AROUND IN GRACEFUL SHROUD,
TONES, HEART-HEARD YET NOT LOUD,—
FROM YONDER FRAGRANT CLOUD
LET ME TEMPT YOU TO THIS LOWER SPHERE:

WANDERING WISHES, FAIN
ACROSS LIFE'S ARID PLAIN,
FLOWERS, THAT WITHERING GAIN
SCENTS LONGER TO REMAIN,—
STAMP YOUR TRACE AND BREATHE YOUR ODORS HERE!

First Sunday in Advent.

PSALM I.

WANDERERS with all frail Desires,
Sutors to each hollow Care;
Till wide to blow each wind conspires
(Like chaff) from Thee, their very pray'r:
Such, my GOD! dost Thou condemn,
Let me not resemble them!

Rather humbly walking, lone,
—Not with splendid company,
Lest some unhallowed pledge I own,
Or grow too proud to follow Thee,—
Let me not with sinners meet,
Make me shun the scorner's seat:

Rather let me exercise

Thoughts and wishes, day and night,
Upon thy Law, wherein there lies
A quiet hope and great delight;
Till at length I find, one day,
Thou hast known and marked my way:

Till at last, in Autumn brown,

Rich with fruit of Christian worth,
As some full tree, I bow me down
To lay my burden on the earth;—
Leafless in the Wintry grave,
Hopeful in thy Spring to wave!

Second Sunday in Advent.

PSALM CXX.

ALAS! that in the Desert-tents
Of Kedar, or where Mesech plants
 His banner to the wind,
My lot is cast; and forced to live
Where rude and fierce the tongues that strive,
 But brief-wing'd Peace I find.

Amid my trouble, LORD, but Thee
Have I, to whom in heart I flee,
 Beneath whose wing I rest;
And mid the shafts, by Envy strung,
And burning coals all jealous flung,
 Am tranquil yet and blest!

There, find I still thy promise sweet,
There, still thy gracious pledges meet
 My tempted, sorrowing soul ;
—The advent-music of that time
When Thou, within this Gentile clime,
 The strife-clouds off shalt roll.

So strengthened, patience calm I learn,
And comfort from thy Word I earn
 Of warfare soon to cease:—
Help me, then, mid the battle-sound
Of eager foes assembling round,
 To labor still for Peace !

See Rom. xv. 8—13. Epistle for the Day.

Third Sunday in Advent.

PSALM IV.

O! RIGHTEOUS GOD, to Thee we come,
As erst when, in a day of gloom,
 Thou heardst our troubled cries:
Hear us not less, when now around
Blasphemous words thine honor wound,
 And servants false change Thee for vanities!

Hear us not less, when now there comes
Up from us, Wanderers mid the tombs,
 A sad, despairing wail:
—"Why has thine advent-promise stood?
Who, who will shew us any good?
 What messenger of Hope for spirits frail?"

Amid thy Church's priestly band
Are there none found, all girt to stand
 Forth in thy gospel-way?—
The heralds of a Light to rise,
Stewards of thy gracious mysteries,
 To warn and strengthen souls that else will stray!

Help them and us; that while they wait,
Thine armed sentries at the gate,
 We too may watch within;
Or if, with hearts in glad repose
On Thee, our weary eye-lids close,
 We wake thine Advent-blessings rich to win!

Fourth Sunday in Advent.

PSALM V.

Soon as the Eastern sky
Doth wear its morning-dye,
My eager soul awakes its hymn to sing:
O ! hear its lonely cry—
True-hearted melody
Of worship in thy fear, my God and King!

If tones, with sorrow fain,
Should mingle in the strain,
Breathed in unrest, mid foes untrue and fierce;
Do Thou, whose foes are mine,
Thy kindly ear incline,
That each faint sigh may to thy presence pierce!

No evil dwells with Thee—
No room for vanity—
Thou, who of old didst send thy Messenger,
With voice and wondrous cry,
Thro' lonely places bye
And peopled walks, thine advent-way to clear!

So now, O! God, we pray,
Make plain thy righteous way
Unto the feet that press toward thy shrines;
That guided thus, at last
All foes and wandering past,
We crowd thy courts when thy best Advent shines!

Christmas-Day.

FIRST COMMUNION. PSALM XCVIII.

SING to the LORD a song—
Newest, sweetest all among
Those, that His Temple-service throng:
For to-day we own
Marvels, that His hand hath done—
Victory, that His holy arm hath won.

Salvation, He declar'd;
Righteousness hath plain appear'd
To heathen, who but faint had heard;
He remembereth,
Israel-wards, His love and faith,—
Freely saveth the world-ends from death.

Shew yourselves joyful, then,
All ye His Redeemed; and when
Ye worship, Earth shall say: amen!
Till the pleasant voice
Of woods, and the sea's wild noise
In our melody and art, rejoice!

For He to-day hath come,—
Leaving His high, heavenly home,
For a poor cradle here and tomb;—
That He, judge may be
Of the whole world, righteously,
And His people rule with equity!

Christmas-Day.

SECOND COMMUNION. PSALM VIII.

SLOW glide the lengthening shadows from the hill,
While sun-light lingers still
On spire and cloud; whereon the pallid moon
Her silver radiance soon
And chastely slumbering beams will pour,
And stars come out to deck the floor
Of Heaven's own vault, with purest light,
—Such as befits the solemn, holy Night!

On such a scene we love to linger, LORD,
Tasting its sweet accord;
And wondering most, in all this goodly plan,
That Thou rememberest Man,

And, visiting him with thy care,
All-watchful, deignest to repair
The sorrow of primeval sin,
And his lost soul again to Eden win!

A little lower than thine angels are,
Was that First trembling Pair,
Who listened to a fallen Spirit's guile;
But bore with them, the while,
A pledge from Thee, mysterious, dim,
Of love and life restored thro' Him,
The Saviour,—their own flesh and blood,
At once, both Son of Man and Son of GOD!

Therefore, to-day, we gather at His shrine,
Confessing it divine;
And if our infant-tones should be too low,
Up to his Heaven to go—
Thou, who of old didst strength ordain
From child-like lips, wilt nerve the strain
To swell with free ascent on high,
And hostile notes, or false, still in its harmony!

Feast of St. Stephen the Martyr.

PSALM LII.

God's goodness dureth day by day,
Mid gentle peace or tyrant-sway,
 To those who trust in Him:
If sunlight fails, His dews abound
On the green olive trees around
 His sanctuary dim!

Yet has He bolts, of reddest fire,
To scorch and wither in His ire
 Such, as will grow apart,
—Such, as their strength from Him disown,
And nurse their pride, with boastful tone
 Or persecuting art.

Why slept those bolts that troubled day,
That lit His sainted Martyr's way,
 The First in will and deed?
—'Twas only, that He might impart
A lesson to each Christian heart,
 And sow the Church's seed!

LORD! give us grace to learn it well;
That every time our bosoms swell
 With some out-breaking sin,
Our martyred will, bowed down to Thee,
Heaven opened, as of old, may see,
 And CHRIST enthroned within!

Feast of St. John the Evangelist.

PSALM XI.

LORD! from thy seat in Heaven,
Thine eyes behold our troubled world-scene here;
Where mingled shades of Violence and Fear,
Across the mystic glass are driven,
And wrecked foundations seek again the dust,—
Spite of the poor man's prayer, or doing of the just!

Yet, mid the tumult wild
Of storm and tempest, that Thou rain'st on those
Thy soul abhors, thy mercy still allows

The Gentle and the Undefined:
Such as thy Saint of old,—the earliest proved,
'The chosen, young Disciple whom his Saviour loved.

These have the gift to be,
Like him thy chosen, first where Thou dost dwell,—
First at thy Cross, when dying Thou dost tell
The Mother yet a son to see,—
First at thy tomb,—and, since no word is vain,
Kept ever here to tarry, till Thou com'st again!

LORD! grant that *we* be made,
As far as can be, like these in their grace,
Forever looking upward in thy face;
And when, of evil times afraid,
Th' ungodly bid us to our hill to fly,
Let us but fold our wings, and on thy bosom lie!

יוחנן: *Vir mitis*: The Gentle.

See S. Joann. i. 35—xiii. 23—xix. 26—xx. 4.

S. Joann. xxi. 22. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of the Holy Innocents.

PSALM LXXIX.

O! GOD, on thine inheritance
The Heathen's foot is come—
Defiling, in their scornful dance,
Thy Temple and our Home;
And shedding, as 'twere water, round
Thy children's blood on holy ground!

How long, O! LORD, will thou retain
Thine anger and our sin?
How long, thy jealousy remain
A fire to burn within?
While wicked men of stranger-race
Lay waste thine Israel's dwelling-place.
3*

O! hear us soon, for thy Name's sake;
Receive our sorrowing cries;
Upon the Heathen, vengeance take
With seven-fold miseries;
That our sad day and dangerous past,
Thy blood-stained fold be calm at last!

So, LORD, of old thy Psalmist sang;
So answered Rama's wail;
And still, to-day, in sight do hang
The Martyr-crowns we hail;
—First fruits of that baptismal sign,
Water or blood, that seals us thine!

See S. Matt. ii. 18. Gospel for the Day.

S. Luc. xii. 50. 1 S. Pet. iii. 21. 1 S. Joann. v. 6.

Sunday after Christmas-Day.

PSALM CXXI.

SEE, how the Evening-shadows lengthen
 Along each sunset-gilded hill,
To mark *their* march, who help and strengthen
 My fainting heart and feeble will:
 Sooner than Night and gloom,
 God's armed Angels come
To guard my rest, and bid the world be still!

And as they stand, glad vigil keeping,
 Bright hosts and heavenly plumes around,—
They tell me of an Eye unsleeping,
 Whose glance, no time or distance bound:
 "His Hand, that Israel keeps,
 Who slumbers not nor sleeps,
Will hold thy feet, for all the slippery ground:

“ At thy right hand He stands, repelling
All hasty chance or craft mature;
By day, He guards thy quiet dwelling
From sun-lit crimes and ills obscure;
And, in the silent night,
The moon’s mysterious light
Shall, harmless, bathe thy couch serene and pure:

“ More kindly still, by Him forbidden,
No thought or dream can entrance win
To hurt the soul, whose chambers hidden
Must, in His sight, be without sin:
And when, in mortal doubt,
Thy Lamp of life goes out,
The LORD shall light to Heaven thy coming in!”

עִמָּנוּאֵל : *God with us.*

See S. Matt. i. 23. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord.

PSALM CXXII.

Pray for Jerusalem!

So did the Saints, of old,

Our modern sophistry condemn;

That, honoring self, will rather dream

Of pasture in the Wild, than in the Church's fold!

So did the Tribes ascend,

Yearly, in unity;

Within God's chosen House to bend,

And praise and privileges blend,

Around that Covenant-place where He vouchsafed to be!

So Thou, O Saviour, too
 Didst, as on this day, own
 The virtues of a ritual due,
 —Fit type of an adhesion true
 Unto that way of Life, that leadeth to thy Throne.

And shall *we*, grown more wise,
 Disdain a way He went?
 And heedless of the grace, that lies
 In CHRIST's baptismal mysteries,
 Nor crowd His Church nor crave her entering Sacra-
 ment?

See Col. ii. 8. etc. 2 Ev. Less. S. Joann. vi. 26.

S. Luc. ii. 21. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of the Epiphany.

PSALM XCVI:

SING to the LORD, and praise His name;
Tell of His honor, day by day;
To Him, who made this round World's frame,
And by whose grace salvation came,
Your trembling worship pay!

More than all gods should He be feared,
Above all heathen idols set:
They fain would paint some trait revered
Of His, who hath the Heaven prepared
Where all such traits are met.

That Heaven, for love of *us*, left He,—
Once, deigned Himself to manifest,
To solve that hidden mystery,
How GOD could reconciled be,
—Man with the Holiest!

The Star is still in sight, to-day,
That warned the Gentiles of His birth;
LORD! help us all to own its sway,
—Remembering, when it fades away,
Thou com'st to judge the Earth!

See Eph. iii. 9. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. ii. 10. Gospel for the Day.

First Sunday after the Epiphany.

PSALM XIII.

How long, O! LORD, wilt Thou forget
And, frowning, hide thy face from me?
Wilt Thou forever silent be
To all the prayers, that round thy throne are met?

With counsel but from my own heart,—
Mid vexed designs, frustrated, vain,—
When shall I be thy child again?
How long until triumphant foes depart?

Leave me not thus: but lift up light
Upon my sinking eye-lids' gloom;
And, if I linger long from home,
At least there guide me, ere the troubled Night!

Till then, with humble, hearty faith,
Help me to lay my trust on Thee;
By whom, each anxious melody
Swan-like, grows firm and sweet, the nearer death!

Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

PSALM XIV.

FROM thy calm, holy throne
Thou watch'st this world of sin,
To see how many souls have known
The way Thou diedst to win:—
Help Thou the darkened wanderers,
Whom every day astray some new-born error bears!

The fool, within his heart,
Denies that Thou art God:
The violent, who roams apart,
Swift sheds his brother's blood;
While crafty ones, though all afraid,
Dig graves to hide the poor, their fraud or force betray'd!

But as, of old, thy power
Changed ancient Nature's ways,
So even now this troubled hour
Grows calmer 'neath thy gaze;
Thy Word, with potent grace and gifts,
The veil of wrath from off thy Church long slumbering
lifts :

And weary exiles haste,
—New strength, new freedom given,—
Even on this cloud-wrapt Earth to taste
The presage high of Heaven;
And, by thy yet-bright Star, to see
Glad Israel's blest return from his captivity!

See S. Joann. ii. 1—11. Gospel for the Day.

Isa. li. 14. First Morning Lesson.

Third Sunday after the Epiphany.

PSALM XV.

LORD, who in thine House shall dwell?

Who shall rest with Thee?

—Only they, who love Thee well,

May thy presence see:

Only they, the true of heart,

The meek in mind, shall come;

Who leave to Thee th' avenger's part

—The sinner's awful doom:

Only they, who think it scorn

To bend at Mammon's fane;

And, if invoked by souls forlorn,

A golden lure disdain:

Such as these, from West and East,
Upon thine hill shall come,
(Thine elder Israel's heirdom ceas'd)
To find their blissful Home!

See Rom. xii. 19. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. viii. 11. Gospel for the Day.

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany.

PSALM II.

WHENCE come these Heathen-fires,—
These flames unhallowed, of impure desires?
—Mocking His holy will,
Whose word yet bids us to lie still,
In reverent fear submiss, beneath His Sion-hill!

O! SAVIOUR, not so fierce
Those olden foes, who once thy side did pierce,
As my untutored heart;
That seeks, with suicidal art,
To break from Thee for all thy soul-redeeming part!

If Love can move my soul
With softening influence, to make it whole
And bring it close to Thee;
O! is it not enough to see
How wide thy heritage, how mild thy sure decree?

If not—then make me dread
Thy sternness, that 'scapes not the highest head:
That so, by Love or Fear
I learn, thy warnings kind to hear,
And bless thy sheltering hand when days of wrath
are near!

See Rom. xiii. 5. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. viii. 32. 34. Gospel for the Day.

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.

PSALM XX.

O! Church of GOD, whose lingering pace
Leaves thee exposed to cloud and storm;
How should thy children pray for grace,
That may thy sky, ungenial, warm!

Nor vainly,—for as erst the name
Of Jacob's GOD could be defence;
And Sion's hill and temple-frame
Could holy aid and strength dispense:—

Not less an unction, lasting, clear,
Their trembling prayers will sanctify;
Who turn, in Christian faith and fear,
To our true, unbuilt shrine, on high!

Therefore, forgoing earthly aid,
O! King of Heaven, to Thee we flee;
That, mid the wreck of trust betray'd,
We find ourselves saved, LORD, by Thee!

See Collect for the Day.

The Sixth Sunday (if there be so many) shall have the same Psalm, Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, that was upon the Fifth.—*Rubric in the First Book of King Edward the Sixth.*

Sunday called Septuagesima.

PSALM XXIII.

FIRMLY on Thee staid,
Who can be afraid,
LORD of pasture-plain and murmuring brook?
Who to stray would care,—
Who could wander far
From thy shadowed resting-place and look?
Ill were it, idly thus to change
Such safe and holy spots for all Earth's gaudy range!

Should we, wildly, strive
Far from Thee to live,—
Who would lead us where sweet waters flow?
Whence would come the dew
Worn Day to renew

And bathe the flowers, all fresh next morn to blow?
Or, can our jewelled feast-days boast
Aught like that simple board, where Thou art food and
Host?

Weary now in limb,
Thro' the shadows dim
Of that Valley dread, we take our way:
—Only Thou art near,
Each sad sigh to hear,
With rod to guard, with staff to be our stay:
No fear but, mid that mortal gloom,
Thy love and grasp will lead us, trembling pilgrims,
Home!

There,—all wandering o'er,
On that happy shore
Where anointed saints grow seraphim,—
Thou, with tender care,
Pasture shalt prepare,
Crowning our cup with mercy to its brim;
And souls, that here have loved Thee well,
Shall all, fast by thy throne, forever safely dwell!

Sunday called Sexagesima.

PSALM XXIV.

Who shall see Thee, when Thou com'st in Glory?

Who shall mingle in thy starry train?

—Not the Monarch, gem-bedecked and hoary,

—Not the Victor, flushed with youth and vain:

But the pure in heart,

Scorning each false art;

—Only such shall mingle in thy train!

Only such, as striving to be near Thee,

(Scions of thy chosen Israel's kin,)

Gladly walk in their steep path who fear Thee,

Paid, if but one glance of thine they win;

These, Thou lovest well,—

These with Thee shall dwell,

Patient sons and true, of Israel's kin!

Nought along their path-way dim shall stay them,
Trembling pilgrims to thy sacred side ;
Hopes and passions, griefs and fears, they lay them
On the lintel thou hast unclosed wide ;
Gates, all vainly barr'd,—
Every earthly ward,
Ope for these faint pilgrims to thy side !

So, at last, when thou shall come from Heaven,
(Whose gold portals keep thy glory in,)
With the light of that late, lustrous Even,
In thy train shine the Redeemed from sin,—
Who walked righteously,
Who are blest by Thee ;
— *These* shall let the King of Glory in !

Sunday called Quinquagesima.

PSALM XXVI.

SWEET voices and calm shades, that float

(Blended with wood-notes wild)

Around the simple, sacred spot

Of worship undefil'd:

Fit consorts for what stirs within,—

A trembling Love and true, that lowly, Heaven will win!

If wearied by this world's assault,

Or wounded in the strife;

Where better can the warrior halt

To find a newer life?

—From those bold, bloody men apart,

Whose hand is full of bribes, and mischief in their heart.

LORD! I have loved such holy fanes,
Thy dwelling-places yet :
Where I may wash me from the stains
That pride or fear beget ;
And, at thine altar-foot, may taste
Companionship denied to this world's howling waste.

Keep me, then, in this safest ward
In mine integrity ;
—My distant feet, with kind regard,
From sin and danger free :
So strengthening what breathes within,—
A trembling Love and true, that longs but Heaven to
win!

Fast of Ash-Wednesday.

PSALM VI.

O! LORD, rebuke me not in Thy fierce wrath,
Tho' wandering from thy path;
Nor chasten me in thy displeasure sore,
As if all hope was o'er:
Who can be thankful more
In this sad pit, or worship Thee in Death?

Have mercy, LORD, upon thy creature weak,
Who would thy service seek;
Nor, from my troubled soul and purpose frail,
Let thy sure mercies fail:
How long, behind a veil
Is thy face hid, for all my suffering meek?

When far from Thee, each pleasant haunt is lone,
And echoes but the tone
Of my lament; and, through the dreary night,
Tears mark the sad hours' flight:
While each fresh morning-light
O'er my pale cheek, but wakes a weary groan!

LORD! only Thou canst sanctify this gloom,
And lead me thro' it, home:
Thou, from the Desert of thine own high Fast,
(Where deeper shades were cast)
Wilt hear my voice at last,
And make my Lent, with sweetest Spring-flowers,
bloom!

First Sunday in Lent.

PSALM XXXII.

LONELY hours and slow, when far from Thee,—
Broken clouds athwart the Day-light free,—
 Sad voices in the Night;
—Such as these, O! GOD, mid gloomy strife
Were the measures of my prisoned life,
 Marks of its weary flight!

Thou hadst called me in the sweetest tone;
Prophets sang of glories to be won,
 Of joys surpassing Earth:
Yet I madly thought to hush the strain,—
Still I worshipped, 'neath an iron chain,
 The Idols of my hearth.

If, then, humbly I draw near to-day,
At thy feet poor, withered flowers to lay
 And dying hopes to warm;
Do Thou, of whose gift it is alone
That I venture to approach thy throne,
 Uphold me with thine arm!

So, when stormy days and floods shall come,
Thou wilt make my hiding-place, my Home;
 Where, in a golden rest,
I may sink to slumber,—compassed round
By sweet angel-songs, from sin unbound,
 With thy forgiveness blest!

See 2 Cor. vi. 2. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. iv. 9. Gospel for the Day.

Second Sunday in Lent.

PSALM CXXX.

DEEP in my heart a lonely Sorrow dwells,
That will not yield its place to aught, save Thee:
And, as the world-sea round more wildly swells,
Still, throned in sullen strength, that Grief I see!

Through the dim watches of the weary night
Mine eye is strained, to find Thee walking near;
And, more than they who long for morning-light,
My soul looks up for answer to her prayer!

LORD! hear my fainting voice, my sinking cry;
And, since too frail thy judgment stern to meet,
Too foul, to abide the glances of thine eye—
Help me to hold fast by thy Mercy-seat:

And, at that Refuge-altar, let me find

—Redeemer ! to thy trusting Israel true—

As melts the day-storm in the evening-wind,

My deep and lonely Sorrow melted, too !

Third Sunday in Lent.

PSALM XLIII.

Not lightly can I touch the harp,
While far away from Thee—
While round the hurtling arrows, sharp,
Betray mine enemy.

Without thy Light, my straining eyes
Look vainly for the way;
Without thy Truth, the path that lies
Before me, leads astray!

Would'st Thou once guide me—once again
Reveal thy dwelling-place,—
The echoes of a gladder strain
Might fill the temple-space!

In His own time!—O, mournful heart,
Bear yet a patient load;
Still thankful for the strength in part
And help, that comes from God!

See Ephes. v. 13, 14. Epistle for the Day.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

PSALM XLVI.

O REFUGE of the weary soul!

Beneath whose gaze all life-storms roll

 Their angry clouds away;

Strengthen in us such trust on Thee,

As that, however wild we see

 The tumult of the Day,

Our heart, fast anchored to thy hill,

May safely meet the surge receding at thy will!

And if the fierce and warring waves,

Whose gleaming crests our bold bark braves,

 All hold away should take;

—Where *Thou* art and *we* long to be,

No madly-curling foam we see,
No billows rudely break:
But, in a glad and gentle stream,
Mid flowers and scents, flows on the Day-storm's trou-
bled dream!

These are thy works, O LORD of peace!
Thou—whose calm voice makes wars to cease
And weapons idly gleam;
Who carest, too, with kindly grace
For Heathen, who know not thy face
Or vainly of Thee dream;
But retest, with especial love,
On Sion's holy hill and Kedron's olive grove.

There, would we rest; and at thy Word,
(Yet mid our furious world-din heard,)
Be still and know THEE GOD
—Exalted in the Heathen's strife
And Christian's pride;—until our life
Sinks wasted on the road
To where, all sin and tumult past,
We find, with Israel's GOD, a refuge calm at last.

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

PSALM LIV.

Voices fierce assail me, LORD,
Strange tones on the air!
Only lean I, on thy Word—
Only live in prayer:

Save me by thine own Name's sake,
Listener, just and true!
As Thou hearest, judgment make,—
As Thou judgest, do!

Thou, O! LORD, my helper art;
Thou upholdst my soul;
Rests on Thee, my weary heart—
Joys in thy control:

And amid the Voices strange,
Hears yet echoes new
Of old hymns, that cannot change,
To One, just and true!

See S. John v. 30. Gospel for the Day.

Sixth Sunday in Lent.

PSALM LXI.

NO DISTANCE parts from Thee my prayer,
No space shuts out my sigh;
From Earth's end, through the upper air,
Still pierces my lone cry—
My fainting bosom's heaviness
Can upwards still, to Thee full lightly press!

If once too low, Thyself reveals
A Rock more high than I;
And if too shrill, thy love yet feels
And tunes the melody;
Till, borne at last upon thy wing,
I come all faultless in thy shrine to sing.

There, each desire that timid swells,—
Each hope that trembles here,
Grows (like the clime in which it dwells)
Assured, serene, and clear,—
In that exhaustless heritage,
Whose light makes up for Earth's dark pilgrimage!

Let, then, no distance damp my prayer,
No sorrow choke my sigh ;—
If bending 'neath unwonted care
O! teach me where to fly :
That vows, *here* scattered to the wind,
There gathered and all gold, with Thee I find!

Fast of Good Friday.

PSALM XXII.

“MY GOD, my GOD, why hast thou me forsaken,
In this sharp Cross and mortal agony?
But, holy as Thou art, my bitter cry
No breath or glance of love or light can waken:”

So, SON OF GOD! didst Thou complain—
What time, One less than Thou in vain
Had dared that wine-press deep to tread;
What time, upon thy meek bowed head
Man's crown of thorns—GOD's crown of fire were
spread!

Sad visions, to the prophet's gaze unfolding
The depths of sorrow in CHRIST's mystery!
—The weary going up of Calvary,
With weeping friends and mocking foes beholding;
The dried-up strength; the melting heart;
The burning thirst; the lips apart;
The pierced hands and feet; and nigh,
The parted garments lying by—
The lot cast on His vesture ere He die.

Yet least, these traits in the REDEEMER's passion—

These pangs His human nature felt alone :

But who shall tell the sharpness of that *one*,

That veiled His SONSHIP from the consolation

And presence of a pitying GOD ?

—While, crowded round the Dying, stood

Forms of all Sins of all mankind,

Claiming Him *theirs*—O ! soon to find

The weakest, strong when near that Cross reclin'd !

For when Thou, SON OF MAN, said'st "It is finished !"

No longer could th' air-darkening legions stay ;

But through their dreary realms the light of day

Divine, Thou borst with brightness undiminished,

Quickening the prisoned souls that slept ;

And (patriarchal promise kept)

Remembering thy lost kin and poor,

Didst seed of EVE to Life restore,

And make us GOD's own children evermore !

ממ—*Chavah* or *Eva* : Manifester, or Mother, of Life.

See Second Evening Lesson and Gospel for the Day, *passim*.

Easter-Even.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

SHADOWS of the grave! that wrap
 In darkness all and in the deep—
Dim Oblivion! in whose lap
 Soon our works and wishes sleep :
 What friendly hand,
In your lonesome, silent Land
 Will our spirits keep?

SAVIOUR, thine!—for Thou before
 That realm of shrouds hast visited ;
Planting on its sullen shore
 Passion-flowers thy life-drops fed :
 There, Thou dost stand
In that lonesome, silent Land,
 Free among the Dead!

Every terror, every chain
That fetters us,—Thyself didst prove ;
Human frailty, sorrow, pain,
Trouble-clouds no prayer can move :—
At thy command,
In yon lonesome, silent Land
All these turn to Love !

If thy Church, then, weeping breathes
A solemn funeral-service now ;
All the fresher will the wreaths
For the Easter-morrow, grow :
—To-day, thy wand
In the lonesome, silent Land
Doth its wonders show !

See 1 Petr. iii. 19. Epistle for the Day.

Hebr. iv. 15. Second Evening Lesson.

Exod. xiii. 10. First Evening Lesson.

Easter-Day.

FIRST COMMUNION. PSALM XVI.

LORD! gathering at thy shrine to-day,
We own our Christian faith;
And watching where the Holiest lay
Till Easter-morn, so too we pray
To follow His triumphant way,
—The Victor over Death—
To thy right-hand, where evermore
Thy presence make us taste of pleasure's fullest store!

No godless scorn or Heathen rite
Invoke our fervent zeal;
We follow no uncertain light,
Seen dimly from some Pagan height

While all below is thickest night :
Nor, as around we kneel,
Libations of vain blood need pour,
But simply pledge that Cup, which Thon hast blest and
more !

And all unworthy though we be
To offer any gift,
(Whose goodness cannot reach to Thee)
Yet, in our deep humility,
Our bounden service and our plea
We venture here to lift :
—The love of fellow-souls and poor,
Whose sanctity on Earth grows star-like on Heaven's
floor !

Our frailty might we well forget
In such fair heritage ;
If Thou, before us always set,
Didst not, with warnings kind and sweet
And nightly chastenings gladly met,
Recall our pilgrimage ;
Whose hopeful Rest is at the door
Of endless Life for soul and body evermore !

Easter-Day.

SECOND COMMUNION. PSALM III.

WHY, as Life older grows,
All nearer to it close
Dark sorrowing shapes and threatening shadows grim?
Why, round the sinking Sun,
(His day's-work not yet done)
Steal vapors drear, that make the evening dim?

For no such cloudy day,
LORD! let me lose the way
That leads at last unto thy holy hill:—
For all their mocking tone,
Who tempt me to disown
My help from GOD, be Thou my worship still!

If fainting Faith forget,
(By foes extern beset)
Thine ample robe, where she may safely hide ;—
Or feels, in a wide sea,
Deserted ev'n by Thee,
—Did not such woe attend the CRUCIFIED?

Will *He* not make me dwell
In safety here, as well
As in that Tomb-sleep He both broke and blest?
—Where no dim stealing shade,
No form to make afraid,
Nor mocking voice, assail our cloudless Rest!

Monday in Easter-Week.

PSALM LXII.

Now our Lenten Fast is over;
Risen is the HOLY ONE;
No more need, His grave to cover
With its heavy sealed stone:
Their device is nought,
That seek to put Him out,
Whom GOD exalts,—whose sacrifice is done!

Once, a word of His just spoken
Bathed the Universe in light;
Now, His dreary tomb-sleep broken
Testifies afresh the might
Wherewith,—GOD or Man—
He, His all-gracious plan
Of Love perfects, judging each one aright.

Tuesday in Easter-Week.

PSALM CXIII.

Who, LORD, is like to Thee,—
Dwelling on high, yet stooping down to see
What happens on the Earth,—
Blessing its sorrow and its mirth,—
Foreseeing all the fruit of swiftest moments' birth?

Thou liftst the simple heart
Out from the dust, and deckst his Desert-part
With fragrant, gladsome bloom;
And listening whence lone wailings come,
Crownest with joy and song that childless, desolate
Home!

First Sunday after Easter

PSALM CXII.

BLEST alone is he,
Whose heart reclines on Thee
And finds delight to follow thy commands:
Blest—in his way and home,
In day-light or in gloom,—
With all thy love that strengthens still his hands.

Mindful of these gifts,
No needy wanderer lifts
In vain to him a mournful cry for aid;
But to the stricken poor
He scatters of that store,
Which Thou for such intent hast fruitful made.

Firm in thy support,
No evil tidings hurt
His humble faith, his heart's serene repose;
And, mid the tumult wild
Of passions, undefiled,
His soul shrinks not from her dim, ghostly foes!

And at Even-tide,
Tho' gloomy shadows glide
Across the scene to shut it from his sight;
'Tis but, that on his eyes
The sooner may arise
From out that darkness, an Eternal Light!

Second Sunday after Easter.

PSALM LXX.

As One, who from some tree-crowned hill
Beheld the golden prospect fill
Of distant bowers and long'd for home,—
Descending, loses all in gloom
Of tangled woods, and solemn shade,
And fancies, of themselves afraid:

So now, O! God, my heart-career
(Spite of communings sweet and near,
—Thine Easter-fires yet hardly out)
Still lingers in unrest and doubt:
While spirit-foes, my soul to win,
Haunt Life without and Hope within!

Where is the old prophetic tone,
That sang of triumphs to be won
O'er all such foes, o'er Sin, o'er Death?
And where, the harmonizing breath
That promised all, who long for Thee,
A way of joy and praise to see?

O! hasten, **LORD**, to be mine aid,
—Who hast each doubt, each anguish made,
Each heart-hope that goes forth to Thee;
And if all wandering now I be,
—**REDEEMER!** hasten thro' the gloom
To lead one soul that loves Thee, Home!

Third Sunday after Easter.

PSALM LXXV.

VAIN Hopes, that struggle madly in my breast,—
Wild Desires, that haunt each hour of rest,

Like shadows on the wall,—

Why, all unquiet, mock my better will?

Why, spite each Earth-wreck, do ye gather still
More strong for every fall?

False heart and faint! from out thy substance come
These shadows, quickly growing into gloom;

Thy frailty gives them birth:

Whene'er some sinful World-stay fails, 'tis thine
To build, with ruins of the idol-shrine,
New pillars to the Earth!

From East to West, my wandering wishes fly;
From North to South, weird banners flaunting high
 Shed strange aurora-light:
Till, dazzled and misled, I hardly tell
(Save when sometimes thy Church's trumpets swell)
 Beneath what Cross I fight.

LORD! only Thou canst chase these thoughts away:
Majestic JUDGE, whom wildest dreams obey,
 Calm my long haunted breast;
Ere some sad day, when, tho' this strife shall end,
Thy blood-red cup and changeless frown attend
 A yet more spectral Rest!

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

PSALM LXXXII.

LORD! make us see Thee ever nigh
In our world-counsels here:
However sure our state, or high,
—O! keep us in thy fear.

If once unlearning, we forget
The needy in our store;
Teach us, that Thou thyself art set
The Helper of the poor!

The out-cast's shelter is with Thee;
With Thee, the stranger's home;
And from thine hand, if blest we be,
Does every good gift come.

When owning gods of human birth,
Let us not worship them;
—Remembering, Thou didst visit Earth
The World-prince to condemn!

See S. Jac. i. 17. Epistle for the Day.

S. Joann. xii. 31. xvi. 11. Gospel for the Day.

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

PSALM LXXXIV.

THE social swallows, unafraid,
 Around thine altar rest;
 The fragile sparrow in its shade
 Makes his familiar nest:
 —Fit sign, such instinct in these gentle things,
 Of that all-shelt'ring Love whose praise thy Church now
 sings!

To that dim shrine we, too, would come;
 There, too, our dwelling have;
 Of such a simple, leafy Home
 (Fast by our future grave)
 Even in door-glimpses brief, more pleasure find
 Than mid rich tents where joys Time's wing can bind!

What matter, if the road be rough
Where sharp thorns overgrow?
Thine high-way, find we plain enough—
From strength to strength, we go:
—We linger not, so we but Sion gain,
For Baca's flowery vale or Siddim's slimy plain.

Fond hope and true! be but as near,
Through our Life-pilgrimage;
That every time we worship here
Add one more wandering-stage,
All counted safely, in that varied road
That leads at last to Sion, where Thou art, O God!

Feast of the Ascension.

PSALM XLVII.

GOD is gone up with a merry noise,
 To take His holy seat on high;
And if ye hear no trumpets' voice,
Lo! not the less, His saints rejoice
(By man unheard, for so GOD's choice)
 At His new victory.

Conquered all His ghostly foes for aye,
 Upon their own dim battle-ground;—
He will subdue each enemy
Of ours, till in His Temple high
While His loved Israel worships by,
 Our heritage be found.

There, partaking of the covenant
That Abraham foresaw by faith,—
The princes of the Gentiles plant
The Cross, amid glad Israel's haunt:
Each Jewish and each Christian saint
Walk in the one, bright path.

LORD! if we, impatient, long to know
When Thou this kingdom wilt restore?
—Teach us, 'tis only ours to *do*:
Thou, who in pomp to Heaven didst go,
In thy good time, again below
Wilt come to reign in power!

See S. Joann. viii. 56.

Act. i. 6—11. Epistle for the Day.

Sunday after the Ascension.

PSALM XCIII.

Quick roll the booming surges on the shore,
 With madly-swelling roar;
As if, for all the World-holds sure within,
 An entrance wild to win!

Yet all their strength, ruled by a nod from Thee,
 But shews thy sovereignty:
The billows, that old Ocean scarcely holds,
 Are but thy garment-folds!

From everlasting, Thou preparedst thy Throne
 Eternal, calm, alone;
Whereto but late thy Church, in worship bent,
 Watched thy serene ascent:

So teach us thence, when passion-storms uprise
That with Thee their strength lies;
Or let them only tear—a kindly part!—
Some World-hold from our heart!

Whitsunday.

PSALM XXXIII.

THOU,—who framedst this goodly World;
Thou,—whose SPIRIT erst did move
O'er the treasures of the Deep;
Now when again, as once, unfurl'd
Glow the banner of thy Love,
—Help us in thy Host to keep!

Thou hast fashioned every heart;
Thou canst fathom each device
Of our idol-building here;
That rests, with but short-sighted art,
On proud human power and price
When the time of dearth is near.

If, for all our high desire,
—Lingering cowards in thy camp—
We should look to such as these;
Once more, O! let thy tongues of fire,
Whose strong flame Earth cannot damp,
On our recreant terrors seize:

And again, from Heaven look down
On the chamber of our hearts,
(Where a few frail hopes yet wait
For Thee thy Pentecost to crown)
Each to mould, in varied parts,
Till thy counsel sure is met!

Monday in Whitsun-week.

PSALM C.

BE joyful in the LORD, ye lands!
Serve Him with gladness and with song;
No more sad rites, or hard commands,
His statutes or your worship throng:

No difficult or distant shrine
A weary pilgrimage compels;
O'er the whole Earth, His altars shine
—Your hearts are courts, wherein He dwells!

He calls you, wanderers, to His fold
With sweetest voice, by strongest spell;
'Twas *His*, your earthly frames to mould,
—His SPIRIT comes with yours to dwell:

And *we* would give Thee welcome, LORD!
O! HOLY GHOST, our hearts renew,
Till we have learned and proved this word:—
GOD ever gracious is, and true!

See Num. xi. 29. First Evening Lesson.

S. Joann. iii. 17. Gospel for the Day.

Tuesday in Whitsun-Week.

PSALM CI.

O! GOD, when wilt Thou come?
—Lighting our life and home
And wilful hearts with thy plain, near command;
—Shewing the open door
(Seen but in types before)
Whereat, revealed and gracious, CHRIST doth stand?

THOU hast the answer made,
What time thy SPIRIT said :
No wicked thing thine helping hand should claim;
No heavenly dews should bless
Sins of unfaithfulness;
No angel write on high the slanderer's name!

Nor is that answer lost
Since the bright Pentecost,
When Thou, O! SPIRIT, cam'st down visibly:
But all Life-fruits below
Must richer, riper grow,
—Warmed by a ray more genial, pure, and high!

And all the Love and Faith,
That blossomed in the path
Of olden saints, more need be in our part;
Till here, one day, we bring
Best, hardest offering
—The walking in our House with perfect heart!

See 1 Thess. v. 5. Second Morning Lesson.

Deut. xxx. 11—14. First Evening Lesson.

S. Joann. x. 9. Gospel for the Day.

Galat. v. 22. Second Evening Lesson.

Trinity Sunday.

PSALM LXVII.

Not only from each cloistered pile,
Where men do come and pray the while
To be preserved from sin and guile—

Let the tones of praise ascend to Thee ;
But from each lowly, moss-thatched dwelling—
From each sad haunt whence sighs are stealing,
And mid the Ocean-surges swelling—

Wake Thou, O mighty God of land and sea,
The prelude to our psalm in thy Eternity!

Thou once wert merciful to give
Thyself for us, that all might live ;
—Make us that saving health receive,

Teach the path-way steep that Thou didst tread :
That, whether 'neath thy sharp Cross bending,
Or warning calls to Earth-kings sending,
Or, as one day, thy throne ascending

For righteous judgment on each trembling head—
We still be thine, O SAVIOUR mild and dread !

Then shall the Earth her increase give—
—The fruit of lowly souls that strive
In thy calm light and love to live,

SPIRIT ! who art brooding o'er our throes :
Then, past each care and doubt distressing,
All mortal gloom and sorrow ceasing,
Our TRIUNE GOD will give His blessing,

No tongue can tell or thought attain, to those
Whose Life-psalm sung on Earth, in Heaven more tune-
ful grows !

First Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Beati immaculati.*

WHAT tone so lingers on the Psalmist's harp?

Winning both ear and heart with music mild,
And melting down all discord harsh and sharp?
—Blessed are the undefiled!

How sweet the echo from some calm pure heart;
Heard clear, if low, for all our tumult wild,
(As soft bird-notes the rustling branches part)
—Blessed are the undefiled!

Just past our highest, holiest mystery,
For what is left of Sabbaths to be whiled
Fit overture such strain, so true, will be:
—Blessed are the undefiled!

Nor less, our short-lived Sabbaths here all done,
 (By no cross paths confounded or beguiled)
Will it be felt, the Heavenly Year begun,
 —Blessed are the undefiled!

So in hot youth and hardened age, O! LORD,
 Make me with heart unfeigned, as suits thy child,
To treasure up throughout this truest word:
 —Blessed are the undefiled!

Second Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *In quo corriget.*

O! THOU, to whom the morning dew
A fragrance brings that noon has not,—
Help us, while Life and Youth are new,
To watch our ways with caution true,
That they may green and fragrant be, and without spot!

Thou givest, in thy warning Word,
A guide to keep our wandering feet;
By Thee, the faintest prayer is heard
That, to thy golden throne preferred,
Grows strong as it ascends and breathes perfume more
sweet!

That word, O! deep within me hide;
That it may every action scent
And word and thought—until it guide
(An amulet) to thy blest side,
Where Thou dost teach the heart to thy best wisdom
bent.

Thus taught, we may thy goodness tell,
—Thus warmed, our Christian love expands;
And while we joy near Thee to dwell
(No earthly riches loved so well)
Our lips long to declare thy judgments and commands.

So, meditating on thy Word
And having to thy ways regard,
We taste even here thy promise, LORD,
—Delight and Duty in accord—
And reap, with thy blest aid, our sure and great reward!

Third Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Retribue servo Tuo.*

LONE Pilgrim on a weary road!

What dost thou ask of GOD?

—'Twixt murmured sigh and half-heard hymn,

Tracing thy path-way dim.

“Only to hide not His command

In a too distant land;—

Only an open eye and clear

To see His wonders near :

“A burning soul, a breaking heart,

To fail not in my part;—

A little light at Even-tide,

My way-worn feet to guide:—

“A pilgrim on Life’s tangled road,
I ask but this of **GOD**:
That, till to Heaven and home restor’d,
I live to keep His word!”

See Zech. xiv. 7.

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Adhæsit pavimento.*

WATCHING as the Day grows dim,
Empty-hearted, faint in limb,
Half-forgot my oft sung hymn,—

Why this sudden gloom?

Why, across the leaden skies,
Azote vapors seem to rise
Till the sickening star-light dies
On yon ghastly tomb?

Near me on the spectral plain,
Nought but writhing forms of pain;
Even the spot where I had lain
Holds a serpent-brood;

And within their fearful dance
Linked, in some malignant trance,
—No retreat and no advance—
Stiffening there I stood!

LORD! no frightful night like this,
—Following some fancied bliss,
Half so scorpion-armed is,
As my soul-gloom now;
Where, while swiftest moments fly,
Trooping shades of Memory
Brand, as each sin passes by,
Cain-marks on my brow!

Cleaving to the dust my soul
Only Thou canst lift, and roll
All this leaden-clouded stole
From the star-lit sky:
Only Thou, sin-shadows gone,
Canst enlarge my heart to run
In thy ways, till lost and won,
On thy breast I lie!

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Legem pone.*

LORD! teach us how to follow Thee,

—Lingerers on the way :

Make us all thy statutes see

In their pleasant sway !

Incline our hearts, that wander wild,

To thy strait command ;

Let no covetousness gild

Our deodand !

Our eyes, whose gaze should Heavenward look,

Turn from vanity :

All thy judgments we would brook

(Love-sent) patiently.

Establish thy sure word, O! GOD,
In our life we pray;
And the Lingerers on the road
Quicken in thy way!

See Mal. i. 8. 13.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Et veniat super me.*

O HOME! where sweetest thoughts did dwell;
O Hours of peace! whose light feet tell
Nought of the errands Time has made;
Why, lonely now, have I to tread
'Neath scathed boughs and dismantled walls,
Or lingering sit while round the Evening sadly falls?

Nor can that Evening's growing shade,
Seen stealing down yon purple glade,
Conceal the spectral forms that glide
To take their station at my side:
—Pale ghosts of buried Sins, they come
To mock my frailty or, blaspheming, speak my doom!

LORD! if in such a scene I droop,
Losing a little while my hope,—
It is that Thou, just JUDGE! restore
All my forgotten truth, and more;
And mid the ruins make me see
The court, where who obeys shall walk at liberty!

Then in my Home again shall dwell
Sweet placid thoughts, and hours spent well,
And fruits of ripe obedience
Growing on every captive sense;
And purple Evening only see
How with up-lifted hands I grateful worship Thee!

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Memor esto.*

PILGRIM Songs! how sweet their measures come—

Recalling, like the scent of dried flowers, home

Unto the hopeless Exile's memory ;

But sweeter far, when caroled high they float

At each step nearer to their native spot,

Almost regained the Wanderer's rest to be!

Such are the strains that Christians love to raise,

--Wandering-hymns, now sadness, now all praise—

To while the journey of our heavenward life:

Strains, caught from Prophets' tongue or Psalmist's lyre,

Or else dim memories of something higher

Learned long ere earth-born,—living spite our strife.

Uncalled they breathe themselves in every stage;
As well when by derision, or by rage,

 The world would make us shrink from thy pure law;
As when, in softer hours, we pitying see
Those, who forsake thy way, in misery
 Or look upon the Sinner's fate with awe!

Let it be ever so: and in the gloom
Of sunless skies, of yet far-distant home,
 —Till that last Night, whose robe wraps youth and age
In silence for awhile—let us from Thee
Receive glad comfort, and thy statutes be
 Our often chanted Songs of Pilgrimage!

Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Portio mea.*

MARKED with thy Cross in holy font,
Thou wert my portion, LORD!
And kneeling at thy Church's wont,
I vowed to keep thy Word.

If once, forgetting all, I strayed
After forbidden fruit,—
'Twas only that half-lost, dismayed,
I made more earnest suit.

With steps refreshed, at early dawn
I haste to gain thy way;
And when Night's deepest veil is drawn,
O! let me rise and pray:

Pray—now no more robbed of my trust,

Stained thy baptismal flood—

Pray—as I tremble in the dust:

Be merciful, O God!

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Bonitatem fecisti.*

'Tis sweet—the summer-storm now done,
All but some fleeting vapors gone,—
To watch the lately-sorrowing Even
Glide tranquil from her Western heaven;
While every leaf the forest bears
Smiles brighter through its rain-bow tears :

And every wood-note, just now hushed,
And every flow'ret, almost crushed,
Lift themselves up towards the skies;
And voice and perfume jointly rise,—
Both fresher for the passing cloud
'Neath which they, frail and timid, bow'd !

In such a scene might Angels bask,
If theirs were not a sweeter task:
—To lift in fragrance each crushed heart
That life-storms here unteach its part,
And upwards all its sighs to bear
Till they grow, like high wood-notes, clear.

These are the aids that Thou dost send,
O! LORD, to us, frail souls who bend
Earthwards at sorrow's passing cloud:
—Hard, yet true lesson for the proud,
This is the word thy Scriptures say:
“THE UNAFFLICTED ALWAYS STRAY!”

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Manus Tuæ.*

FASHIONED by Thee, each Nature-gift
Is but more near the soul to lift
 To thy communion, LORD!
And all our mystic sympathies
Conspire, that thence some heart may rise
 Towards Thee in thy Word.

If sufferings lead them to expand,
LORD, teach us that it is thy Hand
 For good upon us laid:
—We ask not to be sorrow-free;
But that thy Love our comfort be,
 Upon thy promise staid!

If worldly fear should prove our thorn,
—Their pride or sneer, who feign to scorn
 Thine humble worshippers:
Is not thy Word enough to heal?
Or, does its tenderness conceal
 The verdict just, it bears?

Will not a fellowship in fear
Confirm thy Church's sons to bear
 Assaults like these, and more?
—Till, linked in holiest sympathy,
(An unashamed company)
 They stand at Heaven's own door!

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Deficit anima.*

LORD! who knowest all my heart,
Every lone desire;
When wilt Thou new strength impart—
Comforts new inspire?
When, upon my longing eyes,
Shall the dawn of better light arise?

Vase-like, see me stained with sin
Early lustre lose;
Parched by fires of lust within,
Withered my heart grows:
Till, the day of trial past,
Thou wilt free me from my foes at last!

Be my help, mid every snare
 Compassing my way :
Pure and true, thy statutes are—
 Safe, those who obey ;
 Though awhile proud enemies
May aspire our fealty to surprise.

Give me evermore this faith,
 Keeping me alive
In the faintness of my path—
 Quickening me to strive ;
 Till my early lustre come,
Till again my withered heart shall bloom !

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *In æternum.*

WOULDEST thou, afflicted Heart, once strive to scan
How broad the web of the ALMIGHTY'S plan?
Or, sorrow-taught, attempt with learning meek
The sources of His Providence to seek?

—Invoke the splendor of the Light,
The voices of the solemn Night;
Whose trailing robe, if we could see,
But shadows part of GOD'S immensity.

Awake, before some rosy-fingered morn!
—Lo! every fragrant flower and leaf just born,
Each bird-tone, sweetly trilling mid the trees,
Each gently-whispering, cloud-compelling breeze

And (when th' obedient sun is set)
Each star in Night's gemmed coronet—
All answer in full harmony:
"Our light and life persist through GOD's decree."

Nor less create, the viewless chains that bind
Our earth-life to the pulses of the mind;
And make such correspondence, that His Eye,
Who willed each, reads both, either passing by:
The patient prayer, the half-choked sigh,
False witness, or wild passion's cry—
Each marks its moment in that sphere
Where GOD saw from eternity as near!

O! keep thy faith, then, though half-perishing
The World would bid thee all away to fling;
Know, that each Love-pulse just as surely wakes
A wave of mercy, as the pebble breaks
The mirror-surface of some lake;
And that thy GOD will sooner make
An end of world-perfection here,
Than His least word, untrue or fruitless, bear!

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Quomodo dilexi.*

“HE learns their Truth, who keeps my words:”

So, SAVIOUR, didst Thou say;
And so the Psalmist's sweet accords
Told, long ago, of their rewards
Who strive to keep thy way:—

A daily spring of thrilling Love,
Dreams golden in the night;
A wisdom all world-walks approve,
Than 'old Experience' e'en above,
—The fruit of faith, not sight

A patience that shrinks not to meet
Thy judgments, till they grow
Than Hermon's fragrant dew more sweet:
—Such are the treasures at our feet,
Such healing herbs we know!

Herbs,—that not only heal, but more;
Strong amulets they be:
Till those, who shunned ill ways before
To learn thy truth, now feel the power
Of Truth that makes them free!

See S. Joann. vii. 17. viii. 32.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Lucerna pedibus.*

Lo! Morning slumbers long,
 'Tis dark upon the lea:
Yet may we journey, safe among
Our life-snares that around us throng
—God's Word our lantern all along,
 God's Truth our armory!

And when the ruddy Day
 Just serves us to reveal
The real dangers of the way,
—The shapes of fear that closely lay,
Or friends that feigned but to betray—
 Not less that Word is leal!

It quickens all our zeal

Unswerving faith to hold;

And, though in pain no robes conceal,

Though troubles above measure steel

The soul that in our hands we feel,—

Forbids us to grow cold.

It lends to every offering

Free-willed from Youth and Age,

Grace,—till each simple strain we sing

(From joyful hearts re-echoing)

Seems nearer Heaven those hearts to bring

—Our lasting heritage!

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Iniquos odio.*

SINFUL thoughts! depart—
Assailing my poor heart,
Now with storm and now with art:
Evil wishes! cease;
Your lingering hold release;
Leave me to my God, in peace!

Wild imaginings!
Weird songs the Siren sings!
No delight your music brings:
Bright, Earth-cherished ore—
That turns, when kept in store,
Dross-like,—cheat me now no more!

Hold me rather, LORD,
With thy safe, solemn word;
Whispering to my soul accord:—
Till each tender hope,
That Sin has made to droop,
Find for its flowers fragrant scope:

Till my trembling flesh,
That cowers at Sinai's flash,
Tabor's calmer scenes refresh:
Till the trust I build
On Thee, at last may yield
Surest hiding-place and shield!

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Feci judicium.*

FROM early dawn I sought thy way,
To follow through the coming day
Of danger, toil, and sin;
—Safe underneath th' uncertain beams
Of Childhood's star, so but some gleams
Of where Thou art, I win.

And now, when half the day is spent,
—My Manhood's shadow Eastward bent—
My wasted eye-sight fails
To catch aught, in the distant view,
Breaking upon the arid hue
That all the landscape veils!

For no unhallowed aim or fell,
No dew-steeped herb, or elfin-spell,
 I bent my early eyes :
No golden search enwraps my heart,—
Above all gems, or wizard art,
 Thy precious Law I prize.

Bless then at last, O! LORD, my gaze;
At least, before dim evening-haze,
 Let me thy true path win ;
That, if Thou will'st my pilgrimage
'Neath Childhood's star in faint Old-age—
 It be, where Thou hast been!

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Mirabilia.*

SURROUNDED by God's marvels high,
Who can unmindful be?
The mystic star-dance in the sky,
And those earth-wonders daily nigh,
But veil His majesty!

But chief of all, my stricken heart
Doth hold this mystery :
—The light, thy words of Life impart
Unto those souls, whose simple art
Just serves to find out Thee!

Souls, such as these, Thou mak'st more wise
Than any earthly lore ;
And show'st, spite their infirmities,
What Truth and Love and Peace there lies
Even at thy gospel-door.

LORD! who thus far my breast hast led,
That pants like *these* to be—
By every gushing tear, I shed
O'er hearts among thy marvels dead,
O bring me nearer Thee!

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Justus es.*

RIGHTEOUS art Thou, LORD!

True, each holy word

That earth-sorrows struggle to disprove:

Testimonies old,

Yet not dim nor cold,

Pledge each age an all-enduring Love!

Once, consumed with zeal,

Thou didst deign to feel

Indignation at thy shrine profaned;

And, as then, thy grace

Cleanses, now, each place

(Heart or House) of thine, by Mammon stained.

In that mystery
God and Man to be,
Ill reputed, lonely, clothed with shame—
Thou didst not refuse
Old Psalm-words to use,
Long ago made sacred to thy Name:

So when troubles come,
Make my heart the home
Of thy Word and Truth and Life within;
—Keeping me alive
All the day to strive
Everlasting righteousness to win!

See S. Joann. ii. 17.

S. Matt. xxii. 43—46. Gospel for the Day

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Clamavi.*

WITH my whole heart I cry
To Thee, the righteous LORD:
O! hear and help me from on high,
To keep thy gracious word!

With early morning-gleam,
Faith worships at thy shrine;
While, through the night, haunt every dream
Familiar psalms of thine!

If phantoms ill, or drear,
Blend with my visions then—
Thou, who the wish to call dost hear,
Awaken me again:

And let my startled eyes
See Thee, as ever, nigh;
Confirming what I long since prize
—Faith, that can never die!

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Vide humilitatem.*

DECAYING Year!

Fit emblem of Men's short walk here and strife;
Who feebler grow and fainter yet for fear,
As drawing to the Grave-yard gate more near;
Who sigh o'er fallen leaves—reck not of secret Life!

Fit emblem, too,
For aged Christians' precious husbanding;
Whom, Summer o'er, kind Autumn now does woo
With cooling gales, their sole left work to do,
—Their Life-seed here to sow, against the Heavenly
Spring.

O, Merciful!

Who pitying seest our wandering steps and slow,
—Our bark becalmed, now morning-breezes lull,—
Quicken, as Thou art wont, our souls so dull;
Avenge thy cause and ours, with that sharp patient Foe!

And if we droop,
All Autumn-leaf-like, 'neath adversity
And chilling blasts and earthly woes that groupe
Us round,—be Thou our undecaying Hope,
—Our lasting Rest and gracious, still with Thee!

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Principes persecuti sunt.*

CALM hope and holy trust!
Sweet peace, without, within!
A love, that animates our dust
An Angel-sphere to win!
—Such gifts await obedient hearts,
Such graces, LORD, thy Word imparts.

If princely foes conspire,
With persecuting wile;
If falsehood aims my faith to tire,
Or kind hearts to beguile;—
Let me feel awe at none but Thee,
—Thy Truth yet my sure witness be!

A worship, warmer still
For all these foes and snares,
Seven-times a day my breast shall fill
With heavenly-breathing airs;
—Made glad from such prayer-struggles fain
More than from spoils, Earth-victors gain!

So would I look for Thee—
Long for thy saving health—
Love thy commands exceedingly
Above all earthly wealth;—
Till, past this world's rebuke and sin,
I come an Angel-life to win!

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXIX. *Appropinquet.*

LONG years, O GOD, that I all wildly straying
Have wandered from thy blessed Fold and Home!
And, if at times returned, my heart betraying
Still tempted me for once again to roam.

Now, in the dimness of the Day-light closing,
—The dying of the Church's solemn Year—
At last, O! SHEPHERD, by thy tents reposing
Let thine hand hold me, weary but yet near!

When farthest off from Thee, with heart-felt yearning
I longed thy calm and gracious voice to hear;
And, when along the homeward path returning,
Old sacred Psalms came echoing to mine ear.

So be it,—when, ere long, this earth-scene falling

Shuts up awhile my darkened sense and gone :—

Still, amid songs, familiar voices calling

Assure the Wanderer, Thou dost seek thine Own!

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXXIV.

IF THOU, O! LORD, with presence ready,
Hadst not bent down thy kindly ear
To our faint prayer, when foemen greedy
Our treasured trust away would tear,—
Then, in their anger quick,
And serried ranks so thick,
Would they have trampled down the Ark we bear:

And the deep waters, proudly swelling
Around thine unarmed Sion-ward train,
Had o'er us gone: and Jordan, welling,
Once more within his banks had lain;
As when of old his wave,
Obedient, passage gave
Unto thine own-sent, scourging warrior-train!

But otherwise thy Love has guided ;
 Less insecure our course it shapes ;
 —The captive bird, the cord divided,
 Sometimes the fowler's net escapes ;
 And we, spite every snare,
 With but the staff of pray'r
 Have cleared the pit, that vainly open gapes.

No unfelt praises, then, be given—
 No meanless chants, O! LORD, to Thee ;
 Who, Maker of the star-gemmed Heaven
 In all its calm immensity,—
 Dost yet watch, on the Earth,
 Each fleeting moment's birth,
 With ready aid and kind, our help to be !

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXXV.

THE purple morning brightly gleams
From hallowed Olivet;
On Gihon's brow a glory beams,
While else the sun is set:
Fit emblem—how GOD e'er imparts
His Life and Light to chosen hearts;
And how He compasseth us still,
To warn from sin and ward from ill—
Who taught on Olivet—who dwells on Sion's hill.

And, as the mid-day lustre rests
On Sion's towers and shrine,
So, full and bright in faithful breasts,
GOD's chiefest graces shine;
With all like gifts surrounding them,
—The path-way plain to Bethlehem,
Siloam's waters soft and slow,
Bethesda's angel-troubled flow,—
And promises more worth than mortal mind can know!

So, does He hover round our steps;
 So, pleasant makes the lot
 That for His saints His mercy keeps,
 Where sinners enter not:
 And tho' sometimes, by Him allow'd,
 Ungodly men become His rod,
 No lasting sceptre 's o'er us sway'd;
 He kindly thinks whereof we're made,
 —No heathen symbol comes where Aaron's rod is laid.

His power drives out our ghostly foes,
 As from the Promised-land;
 But such as turn back from Him—those
 Are treasured in His hand,
 To share the evil-doers' part:
 While, for the good and true of heart,
 Thy Word and Works, LORD, surely tell
 How Thou delight'st to guard them well,
 And shed thy peace upon thy faithful Israel!

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

PSALM CXXVII.

WHY, all this midnight care and early toil—
This bitter bread, that tears and sweat-drops soil—
These troubled dreams, these sorrowing murmurs fain?
Why conjure up, O! faithless Heart and frail,
With self-tormenting art, weird visions pale
And ghosts of Fancy's phantom-train?

If GOD build not thine House, with labor lost
Thou toilst, and wasted skill and thankless cost;
And watch in vain, thy wakeful sentries keep:
—Lo! while the World, with drear forebodings prest,
Wind-startled, cheats the weary night of rest,
He giveth *His* Beloved, sleep!

If, more excused, it be parental love
That makes thee all these anxious moments prove,—
 Know, that young children are thy Maker's gift:
The raven-feeder will for such provide;
Nay, more—thy pray'rs their growing strength will guide
 Each stone from out thy way to lift.

O! happy thou, who hast thy quiver filled
With these bright arrows, whom thy **GOD** hath willed
 As weapons for thy sinking age to keep:
With such as these around one's bed to wait,
Though enemies should watch the outer gate,
 He giveth His Beloved, sleep!

Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle.

PSALM CXXIX.

O, WEARY Heart! that oft hast lost
A vainly-prized trust;
And vexed from youth-time up, and tost
Till furrows long the brow have crost,
Art almost come, with sorrow-cost,
To deem all, dreams and dust:—

Faint not for that; nor yield thy Hope,
Though many times betrayed—
Though, one by one, its flowers may droop,
Like grass upon the houses' top—
Though blest by none, for Truth yet grope
Till Light rise, undismayed!

Such a frank, simple, hoping One
 Became GOD's manly Saint;
Who, caught by the Fore-runner's tone,
Marked soonest where a light was thrown
Diviner still, and earliest won
 The place where JESUS went.

LORD! make us ever of such mind—
 Prompt at thy side to be,
To feed all human woes inclined,
Guiding to CHRIST the Heathen blind—
Till (guerdon rich) one day we find
 A Brother brought to Thee!

Ἀνδρεῶς : *Vir viri filius ac parens* : the Manly.

See S. Joann. i. 35, 39, 42—vi. 8—xii. 20.

Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle.

PSALM CXXVIII.

DOUBTS of thy Providence,
O LORD! dispel from our Earth-clouded sense:—
Thou, who of old didst kindly bear
One Saint's weak-heartedness and fear,
Teach us, if all unseen to deem Thee yet as near!

If we should gloomy grow
Because we may not our world-issues know,
Has not thy Psalmist sweet confest—
How well they be who on Thee rest,
How labors of our hands are in our home-shrines blest?

—How simple Faith is sure,
To deck a house with vine-like vestiture,—
Each prayer, an olive-branch to win?
Does not each pulse of life within
Tell, how GOD's fear and World-peace here are twin?

And if it be thy will
That some should linger on in faintness still,
In earthly want and misery:—
It is to teach them, best thereby,
Thy Way and Truth and Life, who learn with Thee
to die!

See S. Joann. xiv. 5, 6. xi. 16.

Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

LIGHT, in the gloomy heart!

New life, within the flesh!

A breath, to bid all clouds depart—

The weary to refresh!

—Such, LORD, are graces Thou canst give

To those who, tho' mistaken, strive

To do Thee service and, as straitest, live.

So was it proved of old,

When, on that Syrian noon,

The burning sun grew dim and cold—

By Thine own self out-shone;

And One, whom zeal had led astray,

A heaven-sent blindness taught the way

Till Saul unto the Martyr's God could pray.

Well might old Psalm-words come,
 In such time, to his thought :
 "God sets far off the proud man's home ;
 The lowly near are brought ;"—
 Well might he praise that Name and Word,
 (Soon from his lips by Earth-kings heard,)
 And trust that Hand, tho' furious foes were stirr'd !

LORD ! if on *our* Life-path
 We wander, blind to Thee ;
 Or, nursing an unholy wrath,
 Our way right only see :
 We ask no dazzling Providence,
 —But simply, for our humbled sense
 To hear thy Voice, and friends to lead us thence !

See 1 Tim. i. 13. Act. xxvi. 5, 13. xxii. 3, 11.

Act. ix. 9, 11. Epistle for the day.

Feast of the
Purification of St. Mary the Virgin.

PSALM CXXXIV.

YE, who in night and dimness stand
 Beneath the Church's shade,
Until your LORD (all near at hand)
 His entry there hath made :
Faint not, nor your due service cease—
Ere long, ye may depart in peace !

For so, of old, GOD's servants stood
 Unwearied, year by year ;
Expecting, in soul-widowhood,
 Their SAVIOUR to appear :
—Lo! silent, sudden, like a flame
On night-strained eyes, that SAVIOUR came !

LORD! give us patient hope like this,—
 A prayer for every hour;
 Till, in its season, promised bliss
 From Sion shall out-pour;
 Till, long in piercing sorrow sealed,
 Our anxious heart-thoughts be revealed!

What time there comes a Virgin-heart,
 From willing world-stains free,
 To taste the food Thou dost impart
 And sacrifice to Thee:
 That heart, not judging how or where,
 Beholds thy Real Presence, there!

See Mal. iii. 1, 2. Epistle for the Day.

S. Luc. ii. 29, 35, 37. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Matthias the Apostle.

PSALM CXL.

DELIVER me, O! LORD,
According to thy word,
From evil men and stirrers-up of strife;
Still Thou their serpent-tongues—
Charm them with adder-songs,
Who watch all day to snare my fragile life!

LORD GOD, strength of my health!
Disclose their wicked stealth;
In open battle, cover still my head:
Let all their mischief rest
Like coals on their own breast,
Who nets abroad to catch my soul have spread!

So erst, with sorrow fain,
Sighed low the Psalmist's strain,
Then, as e'er, prophetic in its breath;—
So did thy Church, one day,
Take up the words and say:
"Evil hunts the Traitor to his death."

So, LORD, may we to day
Thee, All-disposing, pray
To guide the Church and help it with thy grace;
That, if a Pastor fall,
At thine Apostles' call
Another rise to take his sacred place!

Feast of the
Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.

PSALM CXXXI.

LORD! let me not high-minded be,
Nor, proudly looking up to Thee,
Demand from Heaven a sign;
Nor let me vainly exercise
Myself in lore too high, where lies
A germ not all divine!

I would not tempt Thee, ev'n in prayer,
Too much to know what thy ways are
And what thy Love intends;
But meekly, like a weaned child
Standing before a mother mild,
Receive whatever GOD sends:

Till every child-like grace shall grow
 My second nature ; and may throw
 Fresh lustre on the Blest—
 Or, if Thou visit me in wrath,
 May smooth the roughness of my path
 And light me to my rest!

O, Israel! ever trust the LORD;
 O, Virgin-heart! embalm His word,
 In gloom or sun-light, still;
 So mayst Thou say, in each event,
 As to some Angel-visitant:
 “Be it as GOD doth will!”

See Isa. vii. 11. Epistle for the Day.

S. Luc. ii. 51 *and* i. 38. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist.

PSALM CXLI.

LORD ! listen to my pray'r,
That longs to reach Thee through th' empyreal air;
As incense let it rise,
That dims not, but perfumes the skies—
Or like the accepted flame at Evening-sacrifice !

And even now, O ! LORD,
Set Thou a watch o'er every winged word;
That none be uttered there,
Proving to my own heart a snare,
Or kindred to the phrase our world-engagements wear !

And whensoever I err,
 O! make me willing, friends' reproof to hear;
 —Calling me back to Thee,
 Like balm on each soul-wound to be,
 And, if not always just, a warning sweet and free.

 In such a fellowship
 May we best serve Thee, both in heart and lip—
 In his own place, each One:
 —If no Apostledom be won,
 His life can yet set forth the Gospel of thy Son!

Feast of

St. Philip and St. James Apostles.

PSALM CXXXIII.

How sweet, to see the brotherhood
Uniting Christian hearts ;
—What One lacks of heart-calm or good,
Another kind imparts.

So Aaron's unction to bestow,
A hand fraternal knew ;
So Sion's flowers more fragrant grow
For drinking Hermon's dew.

And so the Church, in union fit,
Conjoins two Saints to-day :
—One to the poor, consoling, writ
—The other showed the way !

LORD! give us grace to be like both,
Along our world-path dim :
—First, taught **WHO** wisdom gives not loth,
—Then, asking straight of **HIM**!

See S. Jac. ii. 1. S. Joann. xii. 22 *and* i. 45. Second Morning Lesson.

S. Jac. i. 5. Epistle for the Day.

S. Joann. xiv. 8. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Barnabas.

PSALM CXLII.

LORD! who hearest every tone of sorrow,
Every faintest wail of misery ;
And, if dark to-day, a bright-sunned morrow
Canst create, our Light and Warmth to be :—
Let me ever deem
(Deserted though I seem)
That my portion surely dwells with Thee.

In soul-heaviness, my path Thou knowest,—
Every snare is open to thine eye ;
From my prison, yet escape Thou showest,
Cheering me with friendly company—
Raising, as of old,
Mid faces stern and cold,
Sons of Consolation to come nigh!

Hard to tell, which has the highest blessing!
He, who holds out, or receives, the hand;
—He, who to thy sacred host is pressing,
Or the friendliest in that sainted band:
Both, thy servants are;
And both, hereafter, wear
Cross and Crown within thy Holy Land!

LORD! avouch *us* also, in our measure,
Sons of comfort to the poor to be;
—Laying at the Church's feet our treasure,
Quick thy touch on others' hearts to see,
Watching, above all,
Our ownselves, lest we fall
In some hour of strife or pride, from Thee!

See Act. ix. 27. iv. 36. and xi. 24, 25, 30. Epistle for the Day.
Act. xv 39. Second Evening Lesson.

Feast of the
Nativity of St. John Baptist.

PSALM CXLIII.

SEARCHING mid the times long past,
Musing on God's Works that cast
Lights and shadows o'er my path,—
Would I learn, by simple Faith,
Sign of showers for thirsty ground,
—Portent of decrees that in His book are found.

Erst, O! LORD, didst Thou inspire
Strains befitting prophet's lyre;
Telling,—ere the day-spring came,
Would a Desert-voice proclaim
The advent of His blessed reign:
—Duly, lo! on earth, Elias stood again!

If then too high I aspire,
Hear and pardon my desire,
That all reverent would rise
Thro' the darkness where it lies,
Trusting Thee to lift the veil;—
Enter not to judge thy servant faint and frail:

But, while Morning yet is young,
Let the dewy starlight, flung
O'er me, serve to shew the way:
—So, when glows thy vengeful Day,
No fore-running Baptist's cry
Shall I need to tell me, CHRIST will soon pass by!

See S. Luc. i. 78. Gospel for the Day.

Isa. xl. 3. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. xvii. 12.

Feast of St. Peter the Apostle.

PSALM CXLIV.

A SHADOW flitting on the wall,—
A thing of nought—a voiceless call,—
 Such are Life-dreams and Man;
Yet does the LORD most kindly bend
Unto our prayer and condescend
 Our happiness to plan!

O! happiest they, who truest take
The LORD for GOD and strive to make
 Themselves His people blest;
Whether in marvels weird He comes,
Or visits, all unseen, their homes
 With plenty, health, and rest:

These find Him (as His Saint once did)
Sleep-giving, in their prison hid
Or shining but for them
To shew the way, spite veteran guards
And chains, thro' self-unlocking wards
Back once more to Life's dream.

LORD! we ask not such wondrous Light
In our soul-prison here and night;
—Only that it be given
To fix on Peter's Rock our hope,
And, if sin-fettered here we grope,
To be unloosed in Heaven!

See 1 Pet. i. 24. Act. xii. 5—11. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. xvi. 18, 19. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. James the Apostle.

PSALM CXLVIII.

O! PRAISE the LORD of Heaven,

O! praise Him in the height,—

Ye, to whom angel-thrones are given,

Ye harbingers of morn and even,

Ye stars, by whom night's robe is riven,

Ye mystic founts, above the heaven—

Adore the Infinite;

He spake the Word by which ye be,

His Law upholds you fast to all eternity!

O! praise the LORD on Earth,—

Thou monster-holding deep,

Ye lightnings of wondrous birth,

Ye clouds, that dance in wizard mirth

To wild wind-music,—hills, that girth

The compass of the peopled earth,

—Beasts, that her caverns keep,

And Man, to be all-mastering meant,—

Join to adore His Name, the only Excellent!

With such befitting strain

(Inspired, O! LORD, by Thee)

We fill the House, which Thou dost deign

To call thine own; while old-age fain

For love of Thee grows young again,

And childish voices swell the strain—

Until the melody,

From servants here that love Thee well,

Becomes perchance a theme for Saints on high who
dwell.

No doubt, *he* with him bore

(Whose honor high we own)

Church-songs like these unto Heaven's door,

That day the young Apostle wore,

First of the band,—what he before

Unwitting asked, but gladly bore,—

A Martyr's rank and crown;

We too shall find, when our turn comes,

Such lays the pass-port best to our eternal homes!

See Act. xii. 2. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. xx. 22. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

PSALM CXV.

HE, who will seek
His LORD, with guileless heart and temper meek,
—All humbler made
For kneeling oft beneath some fig-tree's shade,—
Shall surely find
How GOD e'er visiteth the pure in mind;
Spite of the cry
Of heathendom or World-idolatry!

The World asks even:
“Where is your GOD, who (ye say) dwells in Heaven?”
—LORD! are thy signs
So faint then, or so dim thy wondrous lines
That none can read?
Or is 't not rather that they will not heed—
Who grow, each day,
More like the Idols dull to which they pray?

Still, Thou apart
 Dost set such as are after thine own heart;
 Succoring well
 The housedom of thy faithful Israel:
 And, that thy Word
 Shall suffice for their help, who fear the **LORD**,—
 A pledge divine
 To this day dwells in Aaron's priestly line!

LORD! 'tis thy gift,
 If we our hearts from their drear silence lift;
 Thou warmst our faith
 T'embrace the good that comes from Nazareth.
 We may not join
 Aught of ourselves with what is wholly thine,
 But simply plead
 That Thou wouldst own us, Israelites indeed!

Feast of St. Matthew the Evangelist.

PSALM CXVII.

“TO PUBLICANS and sinners, does your LORD
Vouchsafe His gracious word?
And does He choose Apostles, true and bold,
From such as serve but gold?”

So asked, one time, in tone of scornful glee,
The blinded Pharisee ;
Forgetting, that GOD deems of highest price
Man's love, not sacrifice.

O, SON of David! didst not Thou inspire
Erst the sweet singer's lyre?
When, knowing how Thou wouldst the Heathen raise,
He offered up their praise!

178 FEAST OF ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST.

And wilt Thou not, to-day, our Gentile hearts
Tune as well to their parts?
That, called to be from sordid world-aims free,
We rise and follow Thee!

See S. Matt. ix. 9, 11, 13. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Michael and All Angels.

PSALM CXIII.

BLESS, Children of the LORD, His Name
Who dwells above in Heaven;
Whose praise, glad Morning-stars proclaim
While echo still repeats the same
Mid golden clouds of Even!

For all such music, He yet stoops
To hear our humblest strains;
The simple heart in dust that droops,
The childless mother's fainting hopes,—
He, Merciful, sustains:

And poorest souls, that Men despise,
 He lifts from this earth-sphere;
 Setting them mid those Powers of His,
 Who angel-princedom exercise
 In Heaven and o'er us here.

LORD! shall *ours* be this wondrous lot?

—THOU hast the answer given:
 "Their Angels, who on Earth have got
 Most child-like spirits and devout,
 Stand nearest me in Heaven!"

See S. Matt. xviii. 10. Gospel for the Day.

Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist.

PSALM CXXXVII.

O, SADDEST hour,
When in a stranger-land we sit alone!
No gladdening heart-songs can we then out-pour;
But, like thine Israel erst by Babylon,
Our harps apart are hung, their minstrelsy all done!

Contemn us not,
O, Worldlings! if at times we drooping seem;
'Tis not that Sion's music is forgot,—
We only wander in some long-loved dream,
Or else yourselves, unworthy auditors we deem.

In such a time
How sweet, but one true heart,—familiar still
If fellow-pris'ner in that sickening clime;
Whose cunning right-hand and remembering will,
With Gospel-melody, our heaviness can kill!

LORD! we have seen
Such grace in that Saint, whom we name to-day:
Grant us to have the gift that his has been—
That, though all others take their separate way,
We, if alone, love near thy Captive Ark to stay!

See Col. iv. 14. Gospel for the Day.

2 Tim. iv. 11. Epistle for the Day.

Feast of
St. Simon and St. Jude Apostles.

PSALM CL.

WELL end the Psalmist's sacred Lays!
The last tones of his hallowed lyre,
O'er which each varied feeling plays
That human heart can know or heav'nly dreams inspire—
Swell into notes, so glad and bold,
As if ne'er sinking back to this drear World, and cold!

True tablet of the Christian Life!
Beginning first with golden hope;
Then, as the skies grow dim with strife,
In sin, remorse, and sorrow, forced awhile to grope;
At last, all mournful music done,
Most joyful strains and clear attend the setting Sun.

Fit is it, that in such a key
The Church should keep *their* festival,
—Last of that ‘glorious Company’
For whom she stores, each year, a due memorial,—
Praising Thee in thy holiness
And firmament, wherein thy Saints their star-thrones
press.

We ask not such high gifts as theirs,
—Apostle-staff or Martyr-crown:

But only, that our mortal cares [down;
'Neath such clear sun-light be, mid thankful psalms, laid
And, though in worldly hearts no Guest,
That, till then, Thou thyself to us may'st manifest!

Feast of All Saints.

PSALM CXLIX.

STRIKE the Harp again!
Wake now a newer strain,
Breathing else than sin and pain,—
Fitting Saints who lie
White-robed, slumb'rous, by
The Altar of CHRIST's mystery!

LORD! thine Israël
Gladly the song would swell—
Sion's sons, thy praises tell:
Children Thou hast sealed,—
Spirits in bliss revealed,
Emulous their tribute yield.

Not repose alone,
These Souls elect have won;
But, by every golden throne,
A sword two-edged lies,
Wherewith to exercise
Vengeance on thine enemies.

Do we seek to know,
—Faint, wandering here below,—
How *we* to such honor grow?
Vain research, O! spare:—
SAVIOUR! long since thy care
Told us, who the Blessed are!

See Rev. vi. 9—11. iv. 4. 9—11. xiv 12, 13.

Rev. vii. 3. Epistle for the Day.

S. Matt. v. 3—11. Gospel for the Day.

EPODE.

O, FITFUL GLEAMS
OF HIDDEN STREAMS—
WHOSE MURMUR SEEMS
LIKE HALF-VOICED HYMNS
OF WITNESSES UNSEEN—
AT LEAST ERE LONG
LIGHT ME AMONG
THAT SAINTLY THRONG
WHOSE FAINT-HEARD SONG
HAS MY DREAM-ECHO BEEN!

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